

SONGS
OF THE
Canadian Winter
&c.
JAS. K. LISTON.

A. Present
Lv

Mary E. Black
Toronto

1878



POETRY

FOR THE

DOMINION OF CANADA,

CONSISTING OF

- I. Songs of the Canadian Winter.
- II. Songs of the Morning Stars.
- III. Shouts of the Sons of God.
- IV. The Ante-mundane State.

BY JAMES K. LISTON.

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TO THE
LITERARY AND GENERAL PUBLIC
OF THE
DOMINION OF CANADA,

THE FOLLOWING POEMS ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY THEIR MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E .

These poems were the pleasure and recreation of the Author's leisure. The first was composed during the past winter, the second and third about three years since, and the last more than twenty years since.

Whatever opinion may be formed of the merits or demerits of the Songs of the Canadian Winter, the Author is confident that thousands will know and appreciate the truthfulness of their descriptions. The three last are almost exclusively the efforts of imagination, and as such they will be judged.

If the Author, by this small work, shall succeed in giving an impulse, however slight, to the poetry of this land, he shall always feel gratified ; and if he shall secure for himself a niche, however humble, in the rising edifice of Canadian literature, he shall feel more than honoured.

ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS OF THE CANADIAN WINTER.

1st—The stern but gradual approaches of winter ; the first snows ; the blades dead, &c. 2nd—Partial return of solar power and its effects ; the mortality of insects, &c. 3rd—The departure of the birds ; the deer ; the bear ; the fox and the wolf ; the frogs. 4th—The navigation of the lakes and rivers suspended. 5th—The rains return, but soon change to frost and snow. 6th—Niagara described as it appears at this season ; the Island ; its durability, but certain though slow decay. 7th—Niagara ; the tower ; obedience to the laws of gravitation common to the great Niagara and the smallest rill ; the eagle flying over the cataract. 8th—Even in the days of Indian barbarism, the cataract displayed the same beauty as at present, and gathered the glories of ten thousand tributaries. 9th—It nearly closed the navigation, till art and industry produced the canal. 10th—The severity of winter in the eastern part ; the “habitant” driving his sleigh. 11th—The young French Canadian’s courtship and marriage. 12th—Clearing the backwoods ; the fall of the tree, &c. 13th—The hut of the settler and its rude comforts. 14th—The occupations of the settler’s family, and anticipated result in independence. 15th—The gradual progress of cultivation ; the orchards ; the “paring bec” and its enjoyments. 16th—The winter becomes more and more violent ; the burdened sleighs, &c. 17th—The winter sunshine ; the icicle ; the frost on the branches, &c. 18th—The city scenes of win-

ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS OF THE CANADIAN WINTER.

ter ; the pleasure sleigh-rides. 19th—The skate-rinks. 20th—The curling rinks. 21st—The masked carnival on the ice. 22nd—The ice-boats on the bay, &c. 23rd—The tubular bridge and its surroundings. 24th—The far backwoods ; the beaver ; the deer a prey to the Indian and the wolf ; the Indian has now more destructive weapons. 25th—The raftsmen at work disturbs the deer and wolf. 26th—The larger lakes unfrozen, but in their bays ; Erie, Huron, and Ontario ; the light-houses. 27th—The smaller lakes and the river frozen. 28th—Quebec. 29th—Montmorenci in winter. 30th—The winter scenes below it. 31st—Fort Henry and Kingston in winter. 32nd—The River Ottawa, and the Capital of the Dominion of Canada. 33rd—The conclusion of the Songs of the Canadian Winter.

THE SONGS OF THE CANADIAN WINTER.

I.

Stern are the notes played on the branchy pines
When evening shades advance, and day declines ;
When cold winds waft the winter clouds afar
O'er the broad lakes, and shrouds the sparkling star.
The Moon's pale crescent and the blue expanse
Are each encurtained as the clouds advance.
Now black-robed Night steals o'er the landscape, reft
Of the fair flowers that Autumn's frosts have left ;
The plough and harrow leave their furrowed lines ;
Deep in the earth the mellow seed reclines ;
The dews and showers descend, till, rooted fast,
Upwards they spring, and paint with green at last
The toil-worn field, where lately harvest gave
Its yellow treasures in the breeze to wave.
Now o'er the whole my sheeted snows are spread,
And every other blade is blanched or dead ;
All Nature wrapt in winter robes of white,
And biting frost steals o'er the lengthened night.

II.

Yet still the Sun will strive to change the scene,
Melt my first snows, and yet disclose the green
That lurks below my whitened vesture, torn
By the bright beams that crowned the rising morn.
Yet still descending showers will swell the rill,
Winding impetuous down the slanting hill.
The melting mass augments the crystal wave
Where the wild-duck disports her plumes to lave.
The insect tribes have died beneath the storm—
Of every size, of every varied form.
And on the river-lake of thousand isles
No more the blooming tint of Autumn smiles.
The dried, dead leaf of beech or maple gay
Far from its parent branch is borne away.
Downwards it speeds, to gravitation true,
For the far confines of the briny blue ;
And lost forever in the boundless main,
Shall never grace a river's banks again.

III.

The swift-winged songsters, with their summer
chimes,
Have all departed to the warmer climes,

Where winter's frosts and snows are scarcely known,
And genial skies adorn a gentler zone.
The dun deer shelters from each danger dread,
And in the swamps conceals his antlered head.
The bear retires to caverns dark and drear,
And dreams away the coldest of the year.
The sly fox lurks, and wolf at midnight howls,
Hunt for their prey, and steal the farmer's fowls.
The frogs and lizards leap and croak no more
Beside the margin of the swampy shore ;
Silent and dormant, in their wintry bed,
Till summer suns again shall on them shed,
And sparkling beams shall o'er the waters play,
And waves and ripples dance the live-long day.

IV.

Now on the lakes, and down St. Lawrence wide,
No more the steamers rush to meet the tide
Which swells that river past the bloody plain
Where the two hostile chiefs, in battle slain,
Sleep near the sod which once the banners bore
Of France and Britain—now at war no more.
The humbler crafts, impelled beneath the gale,
Eased of their cargoes and their needful sail,

Now rest unsteered, moored in their harbour home,
And keels no longer cut the boiling foam.
Thus art and nature each prepare to meet
The covering cold of Winter's winding-sheet.

V.

Down, down the rain falls on the mellow soil,
So oft upturned beneath the farmer's toil.
The cold, wet winds, with sleety showers, descend,
That plainly show the year is near its end ;
And then the snow-flakes drift along the plain,
And all is white—in winter robes again.
Thus is the aged year like manhood past,
Hoary and stiff, and silver-crowned at last.
The bays and rivers locked in icy bonds,
And playful urchins crowd the frozen ponds ;
Their tiny sleighs slide down the slopes with speed,
And stain the whiteness of the snow-clad mead.

VI.

White-throned Niagara, since the birth of time,
Down the abyss has poured his foam sublime,
Tearing the steep with ever-trembling tone,
And even imparting to the solid stone

A vibrate power, which strikes the stranger near
With an emotion much allied to fear.
Even here the influence of the winter wind
Displays the trophies of his wars behind;
Large blocks of ice come floating down the spray,
And plunge impetuous in their watery way.
The waters parted by the foam-girt isle,
That still endures the shock, and seems to smile
In wintry verdure, with its e'ergreen pines,
Beneath the mist and rainbow still reclines,
Seeming defiant of the liquid storms,
In all their wrath and all their changing forms.
Hail, rain and snow, and icy floods, in vain
Sweep past continuous to the distant main;
Still leave it seated in the silver spray,
Doomed to a certain but a slow decay.

VII.

The tower still trembles o'er the watery war,
O'erlooks the whirling eddies and the jar
Of trembling torrents, and of drifted wood,
Fast floated down the ever-hastening flood;
Each drop, each particle of liquid pure
Threads down its destined path unstrayed and sure,

To gravitation's laws obedient still,
In grand Niagara and the meanest rill.
The water-fowl with fearless wing can soar
Amid this misty storm and angry roar ;
The eagle, in his altitude on high,
Views these rough dangers with intrepid eye,
And in gyrations round the scene sublime,
In ærial regions o'er the Falls can climb.

VIII.

Here, in the days of Indian councils rude, [wood,
When the red man went wandering through the
When deer were hunted, and when wolves were
slain,
And the horned herd were grazing on the plain,
Ere steamer's walking-beams or wheels had plied
Across the deep, despite of wind or tide,
The great Niagara leapt the steep sublime,
Beside no village spire or curfew's chime,
And never for a moment was at rest,
But poured its beauties on the savage breast :
Gathered the glories of ten thousand streams,
And laid their laurels in the mid-day beams.

IX.

It nearly closed the commerce of the world,
For here no sail could ever be unfurled ;
Its rippling waters, and their rapid flow,
Kept sails and steamers in the waves below,
Till by both art and industry combined,
And deep resources of the human mind,
A watery channel safe around the hill
Was made convenient by Canadian skill ;
And the two lakes are joined in bonds of trade,
Despite the closure which the Falls had made.
Yet winter now again has shut the door,
And now our fleets can scale the steep no more
Till summer suns shall melt the feeder streams
By the strong pressure of meridian beams ;
And all along the village-crowded shores
Commerce again shall pour its varied stores.

X.

Down the St. Lawrence winter storms begin,
Deep, deep the snows, and hard the frost sets in ;
The smaller streamlets first to cease to flow,
And often buried in the drifted snow.
The "habitant," with capote snug and warm,

Drives his rude sleigh, and battles with the storm ;
His smart, small palfreys gallop gayly by
The well-filled barns that near the road may lie ;
He pours his patois French in ditties gay,
And love or war beguiles the whitened way.
He bears the produce of his native soil,
Wrung from its surface by his summer's toil,
To swell the commerce of St. Lawrence shore,
Waiting till spring shall melt its waves once more.

XI.

The young Canadian reins his "beau cheval"
At morn to mass; at eve his blushing belle
Claims his attendance, as the evening wanes,
And dance and music charm the rural swains.
The violin and song by turns invite
The mirthful dalliance of the "Dimanche" night.
He homeward hies, and boasts for many a day
Of his smart palfrey, and his lady gay ;
Till won at last, she yields a sweet consent,
Her home for his to change is well content ;
First to the Notary, then to church they go,
Followed by jingling sleighs—a gallant show.
Each holds its couple, male and female, there,

Married or single, yet a warm-clad pair.
The snow-storm rages o'er the beaten road,
But on they drive their double living load ;
From house to house, from "Auberge" to the farm,
They make both swains and matrons hear the charm
Where beaux and belles, and wives and husbands
ride
To grace the nuptials of the beauteous bride.

XII.

Now in the primal woods the axe resounds,
And the tall pine receives its mortal wounds ;
As stroke on stroke disturbs the silent snow,
The wound enlarges by each well-aimed blow.
The forest-giant shakes in all his might,
And crashing falls beneath his dispoised weight,
And quickly carries to the branches bent,
That strive in vain to stop his sure descent,
A swift and certain ruin with rebound,
And echoing woods repeat the thundering sound ;
Stript of his limbs, and squared and hewn he lies,
To human kind a good but hard-won prize.
It soon is made to raise the sheltering home,
Or o'er the seas afar is doomed to roam,

To build the bark, or to adorn the hall,
Raised from the ruins of a forest fall.
His roots remain to meet a slow decay,
And mend the soil when sown some future day.

XIII.

The rising hut of logs prepared with skill,
Beside the shelter of some neighbouring hill,
The "settler's" home, of rude construction, stands,
The quick achievement of the neighbouring hands.
Its sloping roof, of plank or shingle form,
Defies the dashes of the downward storm.
Rude as it seems to the fastidious eye,
Is still a home where many comforts lie,
Where humble worth can rest from healthful toil,
And eat the products of the generous soil ;
Where female charms and virtues can expand
Beside the bounties of the well-cleared land,
And honest labour independence win,
Far from the haunts of idleness and sin.

XIV.

Here hardy youths soon learn the axe to wield,
And drive the steers athwart the frosted field,

Or pile the firewood on the burdened sleigh,
Which bears its needful weight the homeward way.
Here beauteous maidens, household work within
The homely hut, soon learn to knit and spin,
To beat the churn, or weave the garment warm,
While sons and fathers face the bickering storm.
Here mothers nurse the darling babe, and give
A helping hand, that all within may live
In peaceful comfort, and delighted see
The charms of independence yet to be,—
When the fair farm is cleared, and debts discharged,
And the home comforts more and more enlarged.

XV.

Thus through the primal forest, day by day,
Does cultivation plod its onward way,
And where the sturdy oak, or stately pine,
Upheld the creeping tendrils of a vine
Sour and unfit for vintage or for grape,
Or useful to mankind in either shape,
Up grows the orchard, where the apples bloom,
And pear and peach their different shapes assume.
And the scene brightens as the orchards thrive,
And youths and maidens ply the knife, and strive

To pass the hours in lightsome work or play,
After the rougher labours of the day ;
And "paring bees" add many a jocund charm
To the home comforts of a rising farm.

XVI.

Yet still stern winter drives along the plain,
And deep and deeper still the snows remain.
The sleigh-bells ring to warn the passer-by
That horses haste with heavy burdens nigh.
The housetops loaded, and the roads uneven,
And dark and dismal is the vault of Heaven.
Still, still descending flakes bestrew the lanes
As the day darkens and the evening wanes.
But though the night is dark, the landscape's white,
And counterworks the darkness of the night.
Though moon and stars are shrouded in the haze
That now can intercept their midnight blaze,
Yet teams can travel o'er the well-worn way,
And carry produce townwards night and day ;
And all converging on the crowded port,
Where farmers' produce meets of every sort,
And is exchanged for European gold,
Transported eastwards, and is there resold.

XVII.

Even now the winter sun can gild the scene,
When parted clouds disclose the blue between,
And gather glory for his mid-day blaze,
Dispersing quite the darkness and the haze.
No more the snows descend, the heavens are cleared,
And the white landscape all around is cheered.
The icicle drops a dissolving tear
O'er the first symptoms of the softening year.
But still persistent Frost asserts his reign,
And the cold nights will dry these tears again,
And heat and cold contend for many a day
For the dominion of the well-worn way.
The brilliant beauty of the frosted pines,
With all their branchlets wreathed in silver lines,
Shed threads of sunshine on the softening snow,
And give mild halo to the scenes below.

XVIII.

Yet still the city scenes of Winter's reign
Rival his blast upon the rural plain ;
And sleighs of varied tint, and every form,
Are driven with speed, despite the bickering storm.
The merry bells, of varied size and tone,

Give music of a kind that's all their own.
Beauty and fashion, clad in warm attire,
Glide o'er the snow, and sometimes through the mire.
What rare delight the youths and maidens find
Through the gay streets in Winter's chilly wind ;
Or when the sun's bright glistening glory shines
Along the streets, in varied coloured lines,
Each turn, each angle, shows some new delight
In the bright sunshine, or the twinkling night ;
And many a tale of truthful love is told,
That summer's suns shall afterwards unfold.

XIX.

Yet winter here gives blither scenes than these,
Which age and youth and childhood even can
please.

O'er the smooth surface of the icy plain,
Where danger never lurks in pleasure's train ;
Here youthful forms can quickly turn or glide,
And quick traverse the rink from side to side ;
Here tender maidens, with their steel-shod feet,
Can on the ice their beaux and gallants meet,
And on some nights of carnival and fun,
To the soft music through the waltzes run,

And blithely beat their limbs to time and tune,
Under the gentle glimpses of the moon ;
And down the dance most nimbly trips the fair,
Embreathing health from Winter's frosty air.
Even childhood here its tiny limbs can ply,
And o'er the ice its lightsome form can fly,
And weave its gambols on the frozen plain,
And to the nurse's care return again.

XX.

And this same scene allows the grey-haired Scot
O'er the same plain to send the curling shot,
And here renew the game his native clime
Rejoiced to witness in his youthful prime ;
Send chiselled stones athwart the slippery floor,
And count with keenness each successful score ;
And to the game to give a keener zest,
Call distant rinks to come and try their best.
And side by side, in friendly contest keen,
Scots from far distant rinks may here be seen
Watching the stone along the slippery way,
Sweeping with broom to give it fairer play ;
And crown the contest o'er with feast and song,
And cheerful mirth to morning hours prolong.

XXI.

And there are rinks that crowd the frosted plain,
With revels brought from Italy or Spain,
Where male and female masked, and in attire
Of fancied characters, will even aspire
To ape the antics of barbaric times,
And don habiliments of foreign climes,
Disguised as Mandarin, Turk, or bearded Jew,
Like queen or shepherdess ;—their costume, too,
So well arranged, that none can ever know
Which is the belle, or which the gallant beau.
Some dressed like devil, some like knight or squire
Some like a dragon breathing mimic fire ;
Some may be seen like Hamlet, dressed in black,
And bold Don Quixote—Sancho at his back ;
And wilder still, to give surprise a shock,
One skated round just like a cabbage stock.
With such-like capers here the slippery stage
Mocks the historic and histrionic page.

XXII.

Still there are some who seek for wider play,
And dare the dangers of the frozen bay.
Some in the ice-boat, as its sails expand,

Will shun the safety of the solid land,
And swiftly skim along the hardened wave,
And all its dangers for amusement brave ;
And with advantage of a favouring wind,
Will leave the swiftest skater far behind ;
Steering and tacking with consummate skill,
Make the light bark obedient to their will.
The icy field may crack and groan and roar,
Still will they leave the safety of the shore,
And sit at ease, though driven with matchless speed,
Far from a helping hand in time of need.
Such are the schemes by which we cheat the time
Of winter in this cold Canadian clime,
And many of our pleasure-seekers sigh
When winter and its games have glided by ;
And some will languish in the warmest day
For the cold capers of the frozen bay.

XXIII.

The wondrous bridge of tubes presents a scene
In winter, down the rapids of Lachine,
Where blocks on blocks of ice confusedly pile,
And graze the shores of each romantic isle.
The Isle of Nuns, the Isle of Devils there

Are each encased, and each must take its share
Of rude embraces from the hardened wave,
Which the warm summers gently round them lave,
And beat the river's banks on either side,
Where the rude rapids rush to meet the tide.
But where the river widens out below,
The levelled waters there more gently flow.
In winter there's a large and icy space,
Where teams can travel at the swiftest pace ;
Taverns are built, and huckster stands are piled
With various products, in the winter wild,
Culled from the garden or the autumn field,
Or what the cooks or baker shops can yield.
Liquors and wines, and ales and beers are there,
With all the séquents of a country fair,
Heaped in confusion on the hardened brim,
Where but a team can drive or skate can skim.

XXIV.

But now we'll leave a while these icy floods,
And sing the winter of the wild back-woods,
Where the wise beaver—pioneer of man—
Makes his small lakelet where the streamlet ran,
And builds his cities round the bridled stream,

Where the brown musk-rat loves to swim and
scream.

Here Winter reigns alone, and launches forth
His fiercest blasts from out the frosty North ;
Here Nature weaves her wildest winter song,
And drives in dreary march the woods along ;
The snowdrifts gather round the leafless trees,
Whose trunks and branches check the biting breeze.
'Twas here the wild deer ran for many a day,
To the rude Indian and the wolf a prey ;
And here the red man raised his rude wigwam,
Traversed the woods, and o'er the rivers swam.
Hunting and war were then his only trade,—
His bows and arrows from these woods were made ;
Now he can make the bullet bathe in blood,
Propelled by powder through the startled wood ;
So soon he learned destruction's direst art,
To give loud utterance to his cruel heart.

XXV.

In the far West the hardy raftsman builds
His homely cabin on his floating fields,—
His raft well furnished both with sails and oars,
To keep from grounding on the shallow shores

Of the grand Ottawa ;—by its currents driven,
He needs no guidance from the lights of heaven.
Patient he works and waits for many a day,
Till winter's frosts and ice have cleared away.
His axe resounding through the frosty air,
Startles the wild deer in his winter lair.
The wolf, too, listens in his dismal den,
Howls as he hears the near approach of men ;
Even now anticipates the sentence dread
That puts a price on his devoted head,
And howls again with hunger and despair,
And strikes the stillness of the midnight air.
The whole wide landscape whitened by the frost,
All other colours for the time seem lost.

XXVI.

Still the broad lakes maintain their liquid form,
Seldom are calm, and often rise in storm ;
The calmer bays the frost has firmly bound,
The softer snows have clothed the shores around.
No ships can now upon the billows ride
From Western harbours to the Atlantic tide.
Big swelling surges, desolate and drear,
Sing like the requiem of the by-past year.

Cold, cold the winds blow o'er the western wave,
Where many a seaman found a watery grave.
Erie's long shallows, and Ontario's deep,
A dismal wail-wake all the winter keep ;
And on rough Huron storms on storms prevail,
To dare the steamer and the gentler sail.
Still on each headland burns the beacon blaze,
Piercing the darkness and the midnight haze ;
Gilding the edges of the foam-tipped wave,
Lights the foam-furrow of some sailor's grave.

XXVII.

The smaller lakes are still, and frozen lie
Beneath the watch towers of the winter sky.
Simcoe is silent, and St. Clair lies still,
Shadowing the form of each surrounding hill.
And the great river, too, that meets the main,
Lies cold and lifeless, bound in winter's chain.
Each turn, each winding holds its icy sheet
To where the fresh and salted waters meet,
And where the steamer's wheels in summer ply,
The sleigh-bells jingle, and the hoofs rush by.
And where the wavelets gently kissed the shore,
The ice-fields split and crack, and groan and roar.

And at each point of land and delta bar,
Where tribute waters enter from afar,
No water-lilies now the weeds adorn,
Catching the sunbeam of the rising morn. [grow,
Long they've been buried, long they've ceased to
Their dormant roots concealed beneath the snow,
Till spring returns, with vivifying power,
And paints afresh with warmer sun and shower.
Nature again in verdant robes shall smile,
And bathe in beauty each enfrosted isle.

XXVIII.

Quebec's rough ramparts sternly face the main,
And winter's storms and blasts may blow in vain
O'er those proud towers which, clothed in winter
pale,
O'erlook the river and the distant vale.
Abram's once bloody plains, white-sheeted o'er,
Even now can echo back the cannon's roar;
And where the river bore the summer sail,
Now crowds on crowds employ the iron rail;
And runners now usurp the place of keels,
And travel faster than the swiftest wheels.
But far aloft, the Fort's majestic form

Calmly presides in sunshine as in storm,
And braves Britannia's foes on either side,
And points her thunders up and down the tide,
Flaunts her free flag of glory in the air,
And tells that Britain's powerful arm is there.

XXIX.

Tall Montmorenci—giant of the storm—
In silver robes erects his stalwart form,
Gathering his glory in the sunbeam's glare,
Pealing his anthem through the frosty air,
Dazzling in brightness o'er the frozen tide,
Cased in his ice-towers built on either side,
Shakes his white locks, and sprinkles with the spray
The frosted basements of his wintry way.
Day after day the drops descending freeze,
Gathering a glacier higher than the trees
That leafless now adorn his either side,
Shorn of the vestments of their summer pride.
Yet still the cataract o'erlooks the top,
And never for a moment makes a stop,
But floods on floods unceasingly descend,
And winter's wrath can ne'er his march suspend.
Still the cone glacier stands unscathed before,

With slanting sides, can touch on either shore,
 And many a spring, and many a summer sun
 Shall spend its beams ere it will melt and run.

XXX.

Still, still St. Lawrence winds his icy chain
 Round wood and mountain to the distant main,
 Sprinkled with isles of every size and shape,
 From Montmorenci to the stormy Cape; [storm,
 From where cold Gaspé braves the Gulf's rude
 And Anticosti rears his sylvan form.
 These lonely wilds, how desolate and drear,
 Even at the warmest season of the year;
 But now, when winter reigns and sits supreme
 O'er the wide waters of St. Lawrence stream,
 Icy and still old Nature holds her plan,
 With scarce a vestige of the haunts of man.
 Yet time shall come when Nature's self shall yield
 Her barren sceptre to the fruitful field,
 When grains shall grow, and vegetable blades
 Shall spread their green beneath autumnal shades.
 Cities shall rise and swarm with human life,
 Commerce and law maintain their daily strife;
 And ships which now pass onward to the West
 Shall even here find harbour, trade and rest.

XXXI.

Fort Henry, too, in winter bristles round,
 Even now can utter out a warlike sound,
 Guards the Lake's exit with an iron shower;
 Snow-clad by storms, its hoary-frosted tower
 Can deal destruction round on every side—
 To landward traitor or across the tide,—
 Pointing its terrors on presumptuous foes,
 That loyal men in safety may repose,
 Safe from surprise, or sudden call to arm,
 To cultivate in peace the fruitful farm,
 Or all make ready, well prepared to fight,
 Rallied around the British banner bright.
 Old Frontenac lies edged with frost and snow,
 Rising majestic from the waves below,
 Where Rideau joins his waters to the flood
 So often dyed with drops of warrior's blood.
 But let us hope that nations bound by ties
 Of kindred origin no more will rise
 To spoil each other's hearths and homes again,
 Or meet in hostile ships upon the main.

XXXII.

Dark Ottawa, too, is bound in Winter's chains



Far Northward through the woodland's wild
domains ;
And mighty tribute to St. Lawrence pours
From fruitful valleys, and past winding shores,
And on its banks majestic rises grand
The ruling city of this favoured land,
Where princely halls of legislative state
Stand where rude Indian councils held debate.
Here, too, a fortress strong o'erlooks the vale,
With all its casemates clad in Winter's mail.
No rafts can now descend the rapids wild,
Nor barges with their timber-burdens piled.
The whole romantic scene is mute and still—
The giant river and its tribute rill
Send not the weakest wave to wash the shore,
Or add their echoes to the cannon's roar,
When the great Viceroy of Victoria comes,
And Britain's warriors beat their hollow drums.

XXXIII.

But now the shorter night and longer day
Make winter and his frost to pass away.
The stream—like serpent—casts its winter skin,
And they who tempt its ice may chance fall in ;

And long St. Lawrence and its tributés yield
The prized possession of their winter shield.
The ships begin to trim their summer sails,
And sparkling waves succeed to Winter's wails;
The melting snows augment the stagnant pool—
The fields are moistened, and the air is cool;
The summer songsters leap along the lawn,
And cheer the landscape as the mornings dawn;
The blasts retire back to their native North,
And all the glory of the sun beams forth;
And Winter leaves us with a softer strain,
And leafless trees begin to bud again.
Nature, re-clothed, resumes her varied hues,
And life and beauty through her veins diffuse;
The echoes linger of the last sleigh bell,
And seem to bid the Winter Songs farewell.

ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS OF THE MORNING STARS.

Address to the Morning Stars. Song 1st—The reign of Nothing ended and Starlight begins ; their beams mix with those of the Moon ; the whole of the Earth's surface partakes of their light ; the Stars depart and give place to the light of the Sun. 2nd—The Stars exhort each other to praise God, who called them at first into being ; their varied sizes, distances and revolutions. 3rd—The rigid laws of gravitation and propulsion ; they reciprocally supply the proper amount of force ; the Stars independent of the storms below. 4th—Space, so long void, is now filled with orbs of light ; the Comets. 5th—The uses of alternate day and night. 6th—Dark worlds surrounding bright suns ; each takes its proper share of the light, and yet has some to spare for the others ; light and heat never cease to run, yet never intercept or interrupt the planetary motions ; the stop of a single moment would be fatal. 7th—The world has many colours, but the starry sky only blue and gold ; it has also many shapes, but the Stars are all round, though they vary in position ; groups, lines and triangles ; imagination likens them to things on earth. 8th—The starry heavens unaffected by the lapse of years, though the Moon increases and wanes ; the Earth and Moon eclipse each other, but the Stars do not ; the starry song shall never cease till the heavens shall pass away. 9th—Lament on the dissolution of the present system, but consolation in the hope of a new heaven and a new earth. 10th—The Hand that made them never shall decay, but shall raise

ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS OF THE MORNING STARS.

fresh wonders ; new Stars, &c. 11th—None can invade the starry heavens, or interrupt the Songs of the Stars. 12th—Stars never seem to rise higher or fall lower ; they touch gently on the ocean ; their image buried in the briny deep, &c. 13th—Starlight helps the beasts of prey to hunt their game ; the Lion and Giraffe. 14th—The Stars' Address to the Astronomers ; their vain attempt to count their number. 15th—The influence of the Stars on the polar regions ; the Sun deserts them for six months, but the Stars remain to cheer them. 16th—A Vessel destroyed in the ice ; amidst all these dangers, the Stars remain safe, and continue their Songs. 17th—The equatorial climes ; the caravan lost in the sandy desert. 18th—The happier climates of the tropics, and their fruitfulness, but even there the Stars impart some beauty. 19th—The temperate climates. 20th—The night scene after a battle ; the Stars unharmed and harmless. 21st—The night scene after a sea fight. 22nd—The dreadful effect of the news on the relatives of the slain. 23rd—The paths of the Stars unerring ; they spread the knowledge of the Divine power and goodness. The conclusion of the Songs of the Morning Stars, &c.

THE SONGS OF THE MORNING STARS.

INTRODUCTION.

Ye glittering orbs that light unnumbered worlds,
And with your beams bestrew the Lactéal Way,
And in the absence of the solar power
Save many a sylvan scene from total gloom,
O let me list a while your Morning Songs,
That spread the glory of your Maker's power!
Let me but catch the cadence of those notes
That circling roll around this puny ball,
And prelude Morning's light without a pause,
And die so sweetly in the orient blaze
When Morning dawns upon a new-born day.

Silent, indeed, ye seem to vulgar gaze,
Yet sweet and solemn is that silent song;
It tells of Power unbounded, and of Love—
O'erflowing Love,—Love bursting through the
 bounds
Which finite vision sets to the Supreme.

How ceaseless is your song! The earth all round,
From age to age, has heard it, and it still
Reverberates and echoes through the vast
Unmeasured infinite, and lights on earth
To tell the story of your natal day,
When from the wondrous ante-mundane void
Ye sprang, to sing forever to His praise
Who gives you voice and melody each morn.
Are not your voices heard amidst the din
Of this contending, artificial world?
Where gold, and fame, and princely power in turns
Distract the mind, that fain would rise to Him
Of whom ye sing with harmony unpaused.

Yes, ye are heard! your voice has pierced the hum
Of this vain world, and reached the Poet's bower!
And stirred the strings of poesy a while,
And given a foretaste of those nobler songs
Which ceaselessly shall stream from seraph lyres,
And make Eternity seem far too short
To sing the wonders of Creative power.

Sing on! sing on! the solar ray begins
To draw its golden curtains round your choirs,
And soon the din of trade, and toil, and care,
And earthly pomp, and earthly joy or woe,

Shall drown those tones so eloquently poured
Upon a sleeping and a waking world.
Six thousand years have rolled, and yet the strain
Is still renewed, and serenades in turn
Each clime, each altitude, and makes the Night—
The solemn Night—melodious with your Songs.

SONG I.

No more, no more the night of Nothing reigns,
And starlight streams upon these lovely plains;
We send our beams to aid Night's silver Queen,
Lest total darkness else might supervene.
With ours the moonbeams mix, and darkness flies
From every portion of these gilded skies;
The ethereal vast, transparent, deep, deep blue,
Transmits our nightly blaze untarnished through
The atmospheric veil, and lights all round
Earth's shores and mountains, and even Ocean's
bound.
Its shores and rocks, and all its foam-tipped waves,
Its coral reefs, and even its grotto caves,
Are gently pierced, though not with solar power,
Far better fitted to the noon-tide hour,
When we have passed in other climes to play

A second note to louder songs of Day.
Thus light and darkness, with alternate change,
Includes all nature in their wondrous range.

II.

Come let us sing, and sing in every zone,
The Power that reigns Omnipotent alone ;
Tell of the wonders which from Nothing sprang,
When through the void His voice creative rang.
The vast void heard it, and obedient came
Those globes of light, those worlds of every name,
Of varied size, of varied distance, too,
Rolled and revolved with Time, exact and true,
Dispensing light and shade in all their forms,
Dispensing heat and cold, and raging storms.

III.

Hail, gravitation ! that mysterious cause
That rules all Nature with most rigid laws,
That holds each atom in each atom's place,
And guides us round in our mysterious race ;
And thou, Propulsive Power, that makes each Star
In the wide space to move without one jar,
That no confusion for a moment can

Disturb the harmony of Heaven's high plan,
But each to each the needful force supplies,
To prompt our motions through the yielding skies.
Thus move we on, whilst all the world below
Is oft disturbed as storms and whirlwinds blow ;
Thus move we on with steady steps, and run
And light the earth in absence of the Sun :
Thunders and lightnings jar the vault a while,
But still we shine, and its dark nights beguile.
No sublunary force can change our way—
Firm fixed in our high seats we steadfast stay ;
Each in his rolling car can smile at storms,
And still defy Earth's change in all its forms.

IV.

The endless waste, so long unformed and void,
Is now with brilliant orbs of light supplied ;
Varied in size, in glory differing still,
They all were measured by that Sovereign Will
That rules all worlds, and numbers every star,
And calls the wandering comets from afar
To spread their lighted trains o'er half the sky,
Till in the solar blaze they fade and die.
No ! they die not, but bathe beneath his beam,

And soon emerge from out that amber stream ;
Soon journeying out again, ne'er miss the track,
For gravitation soon shall send them back
To spread the glory to each distant world,—
With force augmented, on and on they're hurled.

V.

Thus do the gentler glories of the night
Restrain the exuberance of the solar light ;
Else scorched and bare each circling globe would be,
Perhaps one side o'erwhelmed in flood and sea,
One side too cold, the other scorched and dry—
A changeless, lifeless, dull, insipid sky ;
All in confusion soon would be involved :
If life were there, life soon would be dissolved.

VI.

Thus wondrous Wisdom rules and tempers all,
And puts dark worlds beside each fiery ball ;
Each World revolving takes its proper share,
And yet for other Worlds has some to spare ;
For light and heat can never cease to run,
But glide from World to World, from Sun to Sun.
From these unfailing fountains still it pours,

And warms Earth's mountains, vales, and seas, and
shores ;

But though it pours in lines direct and strong,

None's intercepted as it speeds along,

But each can roll, and each can still display

The self-same circles on its unmarked way,

Leaving no track to guide it round again—

Its paths are certain through the ethereal main ;

For should it but one moment make a stop,

Down on its central orb it soon should drop,—

Its self-propulsion would forever die,

And leave its place a blank upon the sky.

VII.

The World its thousand colours can unfold,

We've only two—we've only blue and gold ;

The World has many a shape, we've only one—

We all are round, and modelled on the Sun.

Though uniform in shape, we vary all .

In relative position round this ball ;

Sometimes we stand in groups, sometimes in lines,

Triangles here we form, there magic signs,

Which strong imagination might contrive

To shape like forms on Earth, even things alive,

Like bears or lions, serpents, trees or stones,
Like beasts of every kind throughout her zones ;
Like crowns or helmets, swords, or spears, or shields,
Like ploughs or chariots moving o'er our fields.
But yet whate'er our shape, where'er we stand,
We light diffuse that reaches every land ;
Alike the torrid and the frigid climes
Partake the bounty of our blaze betimes ;
And though to light the Day we ne'er presume,
The darkened vault of Heaven we quick relume ;
Save sublunary scenes from dark dismay
Till orient Morning ushers back the Day.

VIII.

We run, and roll, and shine, and yet our spheres
Are unaffected by the lapse of years.
All sublunary things increase and wane,
Like tides which sink and raise the watery main.
The Moon herself in crescent sometimes shines,
The Moon herself increases and declines ;
She disappears each month below the wave—
A dimmed horizon marks her watery grave ;
But still we Stars adorn Night's dome and arch,
And o'er the circling round we proudly march.

The Earth and Moon each other's light can mar,
But that can ne'er befall a single Star.
The clouds sometimes exclude our gentle ray;
Soon we'll be wrapt up in the beams of Day;
But though suspended oft our solemn song,
It never was, nor will be, silent long,
Till with a noise the Heavens shall pass away,
When elements with heat intense decay,
And Earth and Ocean each in fire involved,
And all our present systems are dissolved.

IX.

Ah! sad, sad thought, that all these fires which burn,
And light and cheer each latitude in turn,
Shall be forever quenched, and sing no more
To check the rudeness of the Ocean's roar;
That all the glory of these lamps on high
Shall be at once extinct, and droop and die.
But though these wonders soon shall disappear,
God's hand another Heaven soon shall uprear;
Another Heaven its glories shall unfold,
Another Earth, more beauteous to behold;
Compared with this, more brightly both shall shine,
Made by the same Omnific hand Divine.

X.

But though these works of His shall flee away,
The Hand that made us never shall decay ;
Its self-existent, uncreated might
Shall order all things, and shall order right.
Progressive movement, stamped on all below,
Shall make creation bright and brighter glow ;
New worlds shall roll, new stars in Heaven shall
 shine,
To show His might and energy Divine.
His praise shall sound in many a distant sphere
Of moving temples, which His hand shall rear.
No measured bounds His power and wisdom know—
With His wide bounty all creations flow.
New Suns shall warm, new Moons shall cheer the
 Night,
New Stars shall twinkle, and diffuse new light.
Though all things seen shall be dissolved in fire,
The voice creative never shall expire,
But call creations from the womb of Time,
And paint fresh colours on the scene sublime.

XI.

But still our present is a glorious song ;
To us alone Heaven's orchestras belong.

No earthly power can our bright realms invade,
No earthly shadow casts us in the shade ;
No harm can reach us on our sapphire thrones,
No human voice can interrupt our tones.
The whole creation hears our solemn song ;
We cheer the planets as they march along ;
Light we dispense, but light we never lose,
But all its blessings largely we diffuse.
The Northern Lights may come in flickering forms,
The Northern Lights may come and tell of storms ;
But far above their influence still we fly,
And hold the highest places in the sky.

XII.

Serene we smile each night upon your ball,
Never rise higher, and no lower fall ;
We touch so gently on the liquid deep,
We ne'er disturb its calm and placid sleep ;
Our bright, bright image buried in its brine,
Sunk and inverted, yet it still can shine ;
But when the deep begins to heave and roar
We flicker o'er the waves which wash the shore,
And gild the silvery currents as they fly,
With golden glory gathered in the sky.

XIII.

Fountains and rills reflect our feeble flame—
We help the fiercer brutes to hunt their game.
The Moon's pale radiance would too soon reveal
The lurking danger which the reeds conceal ;
But Stars have just enough of light to show
The cruel spoiler where and when to go.
When to the distant stream the Giraffe hies,
The hungry Lion at his life-blood flies ;
Hid in the jungle near he couches low,
Watching impatient to inflict the blow ;
Out from beneath his herbal hiding place
He starts and leaps, and then begins the chase,
Till on his back the forest tyrant rides,
And with his roar his victim's moanings hides ;
His iron teeth invade his spotted hair ;
When the red current runs he leaves him there,
The mangled carcass of a noble beast,
For meaner creatures to enjoy the feast.

XIV.

And ye whose optic tubes invade our sky,
And make your neighbouring planets seem so nigh,
And multiply our numbers by their power,

When darkened Heavens proclaim the midnight
hour,
Stretch as ye may to reach our endless chain,
Or count our number, ye may stretch in vain ;
For were their powers a million times as strong,
You ne'er could scan the borders of our throng ;
And when the utmost of your skill is spent,
You've but begun to measure our extent.
In vain ye try to mete our endless host,
For in the maze imagination's lost.
Imagination may conceive an end,
But dare not say no farther we extend.
You cannot reach, with all the aids you try,
The ulterior regions of the starry sky.

XV.

Even in the frigid regions of the Pole
We sing and shine, the darkness to control ;
Where icy temples point their glittering spires,
They, too, reflect the effulgence of our fires.
Six months the Sun deserts the snow-clad towers,
Six months the glories of the Heavens are ours ;
The white Bear hunts upon the hardened wave,
Where the live Seal has dug his gelid grave.

The Whale plays round the cold, cold regions there,
Where all would seem but darkness and despair,
Did not the Heavens our starry hosts detain
Till the Sun deigns to visit them again.

XVI.

The vessel glides between two seas congealed,
Where danger lurks in every wave concealed ;
And when the storms above begin to blow,
Transparent islands at their biddance go.
Tossed on the tempest tides, they heave and roar,
And dash the feeble bark upon the shore ;
The ice-bound shores receive and give the shock,
Sharper than steel, and harder than the rock ;
The shattered timbers skim the angry waves
Where crew and captain found their icy graves.
Still the broad Heavens can shine, and still disclose
Their bright round points amid these watery woes ;
Still the safe Stars, with a continuous song,
Can move unscathed, and still their notes prolong.

XVII.

Aye, and we curve the equatorial climes ;
They, too, attend our merry midnight chimes.

Where sandy whirlwinds and sirocco storms
Cause death and sickness in a thousand forms,
The caravan pursues its weary way
O'er sandy deserts, where no tribe can stay ;
There gales oft blow more dreadful than the main,
And heap fierce horrors on the shifting plain ;
The unliquid billows bury there the crowd,
Wrapt up forever in their dusty shroud.
Camels and men, and merchandise and store,
Shall no more climb the green Oasis shore,
But clasped in Death's embrace, they no more know
Fatigue or sorrow in the world below.

XVIII.

But there are climes more generous in their soil,
Where men can live luxuriant without toil,
Where Nature spreads her choicest fruits and grains,
Warmed in the sunshine, moistened by the rains ;
Where bread-trees blossom, and where bananas grow
Unnipped by frost, unwhitened by the snow ;
Where oil and milk exude from forest trees,
And odours rich are borne upon the breeze ;
Even there the influence of our wandering strains
Imparts some beauty to those warm domains,

Relieves the oppression of the Solar power,
And spreads the glory to the midnight hour.

XIX.

Yet in the tempered climes we love to sing,
And chant the beauties of an opening spring,
And gild the drippings of the wild cascades
Ere Morning Sun has shaped the sylvan shades ;
Where rural verdure paints the velvet green,
And pinks and blossoms peep the leaves between ;
Where fruits and grains are bursting from the soil,
And stalwart swains are resting from their toil,
And the breeze plays so gently through the grove
With notes responsive to our songs of love.
And we can watch the opening of the Day,
When gentle zephyrs o'er the streamlets play,
And where the woolly sheep, as yet unshorn,
Repose or graze, and greet the rising morn.

XX.

And there are scenes of blood, and strife, and toil,
Left by the Sun on War's polluted soil,
Where wounded warriors cry for help in vain,
And star-beams glisten on the prostrate slain.

The cannon now has ceased to belch and roar,
And the swift bullet seeks for blood no more ;
Swords, helms and rifles strewn among the dead—
A host has conquered, and a host has fled.
All, all is still where noisy War did reign,
The gelid night winds whisper o'er the slain,
Where strife and vengeance lately held the sway
Throughout the crisis of a bloody day ;
There's nought but dead or dying on that plain,
There's nought but sorrow, mingled, too, with pain.
The fires burn bright, to scare the wolf away,
Lest the cold earth should lose its lawful prey ;
But still the Stars shine bright and cold and clear,
Unharm'd and harmless in their high career.

XXI.

The warrior fleets have met. The strife is o'er.
The captured ships, 'twixt captors and the shore,
Their shattered forms are tossing on the tide.
Even victor ships are shorn of half their pride.
Their spars and masts are dancing on the brine,
On which the Stars continue still to shine ;
And human forms of each contending State
Cling to the timbers, saved from sorer fate.

The dead from blood-stained decks are heedless
thrown,
Each ship disgorging what was once her own.
Down to the pit of wounds the brave are borne,
Some of their limbs bereft, who on the morn
Walked proudly on the deck in youthful glee,
Scorning the foe as oft they scorned the sea,
When its fierce billows rose in angry roar,
And seemed to urge them on a rocky shore.

XXII.

Some widowed mother's darling son is slain,
Some father's hope is cast into the main
To feed the hungry sharks, or there decay,
Dissolving 'neath the starbeams and the spray.
Some sister's heart shall rend to hear the tale
Of glory, carried by the speedy mail,
Which in one bag bears glory to the State,
Fills a proud Nation with a song elate
Of conquered foes, and triumphs dearly won,
But tells the mother she has lost a son,
The wife a husband, or the maid her love,
The son a father, borne to realms above,
Where wars can ne'er disturb the peaceful reign,

Nor sorrows come to clench the captive's chain.
But o'er this scene of glory and of blood
The Stars still twinkle, and adorn the flood ;
Transparent still, it mocks our brightest hues,
And light we still can o'er its waves diffuse.

XXIII.

Our paths are smooth. We never lose our way ;
We never for a moment make delay,
But walk the Heavens, and light all lands, and shine
And spread the knowledge of His power Divine—
That Power Almighty that has placed us here
To teach His boundless love, His holy fear.
These Heavens declare His glory, and proclaim
And sound the praises of His wondrous name ;
The firmament his handiwork doth show,
And teaches Wisdom to the World below.
No speech or language is there to be found
Which does not hear the universal sound.

CONCLUSION OF THE SONGS OF THE MORNING STARS.

The Songs have ceased. The Starry host no more
 With silent eloquence can give forth tones
 That tremble on the edge of opening day ;
 But still methinks I feel as if the Earth,
 Responsive yet, rejoins with echoes long [choirs,
 To the sweet strains poured from yon twinkling
 And dwells reverberant on my raptured ear.

Yes, ye are still ! and Day with brightening beam
 Has for the time o'ertuned your morning chimes
 With ruder eloquence. But still you wait
 In silence, and are ready to renew
 Your nightly anthem to Jehovah's praise.

The swift diurnal round again excludes
 Your brilliant throng. The monarch Sun resumes
 His dazzling throne among reflective clouds,
 And silences at once your Starry Songs.

How wonderful to think that He, even He
 Who works such wonders on this darkened mould,
 Is in ten thousand Worlds but one small Star,
 Scarce noticed 'mong the millions his compeers ;
 And millions more of midnight Suns ne'er saw
 That Sun which^fhere illumines many a World,

And fructifies them all; binds fast the chain
Of planetary orbs which here revolve
In annual circuit round His central fire.

O wondrous Power Supreme, which can at once
Propel the great astronomy above,
And the same moment watch the pulses fine
Which in the myriad animaculæ
Beat with a ceaseless motion in their veins,
And all the elements keep running o'er
With lives too fine for human eyes to scan.

Imagination sinks exhausted here!
This is its highest flight. It flies no more,
But feels its feebleness and prostrate falls,
And worships Him who reared these wondrous
realms.

ANALYSIS OF THE SHOUTS OF THE SONS OF GOD.

Introduction—Who are, and who are not, the Sons of God ? They witness creation, and watch its various evolutions. 1st—They exhort each other to sing the praise of God ; the distances and magnitudes of the Universe. 2nd—They are but of yesterday, and know nothing. 3rd—The Worlds spreading over the Sea of Space ; each sends out a flood of beams ; their propulsion and gravitation. 4th—Exhortation to louder praise ; God alone saw the past and rules the future ; they are subjects of progress, but He is forever the same and incomprehensible. 5th—Mixing of fires with fires, and beams with beams ; His mandates obeyed. 6th—The Universe exhorted to echo back His praise. 7th—None can extinguish the blaze, or detract from His glory ; He only can grasp the whole, all secondary being dependent ; the order of the Universe. 8th—Light and its various properties. 9th—They first observe this World in its primal marine state ; storms, &c. ; no light ; but their faith lays hold of it as the future abode of Man. 10th—The Spirit moves on the deep, and composes it ; the rocks, mountains and valleys arise from the water. 11th—The clouds and vapours ; the leaves, plants and flowers. 12th—The Fishes. 13th—The Birds. 14th—The various heights to which the birds can rise ; their different localities and various colours. 15th—The Quadrupeds and their varieties. 16th—These but the lower creatures ; their comparative relations and employments.

ANALYSIS OF THE SHOUTS OF THE SONS OF GOD.

A pause in the Shouts on the announcement of Man's creation.

17th—New songs of praise required ; Man pre-eminent. 18th—Far above the rest, and his superior destiny is thereby proved ; distinctive holiness ; Man the last of His works. 19th—No, not the last, for his partner is seen issuing from his side ; her superior beauty ; their loveliness ; the power of Love transmitted from Heaven ; their symmetry. 20th—The delight felt by the Sons of God on witnessing their young loves. 21st—The glory shed down on the garden ; its beauty. 22nd—The human the fairest of all forms there ; their primal innocence. 23rd—Day unto day, and night unto night, teaches knowledge of the Divine power. 24th—All the while the planetary orbs move with perfect order and regularity. 25th—The Doxology.

The conclusion of the Shouts of the Sons of God.

THE SHOUTS OF THE SONS OF GOD.

The Sons of God! and who are they so near
Of kin to Him who in eternity
Dwelt increate, and shall forever reign
In self-existent, uncreated might,
And never was not, and shall never cease
To live in glorious majesty enthroned,
Holding the issues of the universe?

Are they the Angelic throng that wait His will,
And spread His high behests to distant spheres,
And like a flame of fire His high commands
Speed to the utmost edge of Worlds remote?

No! they're but servants, for no sonship they
Can claim, no brotherhood with Him the Son,
Who died the sons unworthy to release
From Satan's bondage, and to wash from stains
Of guilt of blackest dye, and them to clothe
In robes of dazzling brightness, washed in blood—
In mercy's proper blood most innocent—
And then present them Kings and Priests to God.

But of His ancient Sons we now shall sing,

Who never sinned, who watched the wondrous rise
Of this fair Universe of Sun-lit spheres,
Of countless Orbs to fill the vacant Vast,
And crowd the portals of Eternity
With myriads bursting into being's bliss.

They saw it loom upon the dark domain
Where nought had ever shone, or dwelt, or moved.
They caught the effulgence of the blended blaze
Of countless orbs of light, which poured their
streams

Of glory to the very gates of Heaven.

They gazed, and with exultant tones they sang
A welcome shout of gratulation strong.

A Royal race they were. The King of Kings
Owned them as His, and crowned them with His love.
They sat on dazzling thrones, and worshipped Him,
Their Father and their King. Their brother, He
Who claimed equality with God himself,
Begotten, not created like the rest,
Who owned subjection to His power Supreme.

God-like they sat. Each held his harp and sang.
With holy harmony they hymned His praise,
Watching each evolution of His will
As being budded into blissful life;

And as the vacant, vast, eternal Void
 Was garnished with revolving orbs of light,
 And worlds created round to share the beams,
 They shouted loud, and all the new-formed spheres
 Re-echoed back the loud but solemn tones.

I.

Shout, all ye Sons of one eternal Sire !
 Let each bright harp, and each bright golden wire,
 Each voice melodious filled with solemn song,
 Give forth loud notes, and streams of praise prolong.
 Let Heaven's high arches ring with loudest praise
 As His right hand these wondrous realms shall raise,
 And crowd with beauty all the vacant space,
 Far as our thoughts can reach, or eye can trace;
 Our strongest wing could never cross these realms—
 Their vast extent our largest thought o'erwhelms.

II.

We're but of yesterday, and nothing know ;
 But while Eternity shall onward flow,
 His wondrous power, His wondrous skill Divine,
 In these bright orbs shall still remain and shine.
 They all revolve in circles large or small ;

Each darkened World runs round its parent ball ;
 Each brilliant sphere sends forth a stream of light,
 To measure out their season's day and night,
 Where beings, suited to their tempered climes,
 Can live and move, and taste His love betimes.

III.

See how the myriad orbs are spreading o'er
 That boundless sea of space we can't explore,
 And from each brilliant orb a flood of beams
 Exhaustless flows, and every moment streams.
 Each on its axis turned, is onward hurled,
 The eccentric Comet, and the circling World ;
 None for a moment wait, and none delay
 To mark the boundaries of each Night and Day.
 These fiery globes, with gravitating power,
 Bind them to measure every lustrous hour ;
 Bend their propulsive force, to make them fly
 In circling orbits through the ethereal sky.

IV.

Ring out your loudest peals, ye Heaven-toned lyres !
 Strain to the full extent melodious wires !
 Let the wide echoing Vast, made vocal, ring

To Him the increate, creating King !
He, he alone the Past Eternal saw,
And to the future He alone gives law ;
He, He alone His life from none derives,
And He alone each changing scene survives.
In progress we, the first fruits of His love,
From age to age ascending steps must prove ;
But He the same has ever been, and still
Remains unaltered, both in power and will—
To-day and yesterday, and evermore,
The unfathomed Infinite, without a shore.
No finite mind can comprehend His way—
All came from Him, and all worlds on Him stay.

. V.

Sing loud, ye Sons of God ! Creations rise
On every side around our wondering eyes.
He works His wonders, and out spring the streams,
Commingling fires with fires, and beams with beams
Of brilliant light, to cheer His wide domain,
And send His praises back to Heaven again.
Far, far and wide He spreads His glory round,
But choicest blessings still with us abound.
All these His power and wisdom still supplies,

And from His throne the power-clad mandate flies.
None can resist it, or His works delay—
The flaming fires, the solid spheres obey.

VI.

Now let yon moving mass of light sublime
Re-echo back from each orbital clime
Of measured temperature. The notes prolong
With holy anthems and with solemn song ;
Proclaim through all these realms the natal day
Of wondrous worlds that own His sovereign sway
Glory to God in highest praises sing,
And with the speed of Light's unwearied wing
Send out the glory to each distant sphere,
And spread the bliss that holds its centre here.

VII.

None can the blaze extinguish. None can dim
The undivided glory due to Him
Who gave us power to mark His works sublime,
And see these works extend through future time.
None but Himself at once can grasp the whole—
His power creates, and lights up every soul.
All secondary beings on Him cling,

Each crown subordinate, or seraph wing.
All worship at His feet, and ever shout.
The whole vast Universe is filled throughout
With awful grandeur, and with beauty, too,
With order regular, and measure true.
Each orb obeys the stern but just decree—
None can beyond its curve escape or flee;—
To aught but its appointed path remove,
Marked out by Wisdom, and ordained in Love.

VIII.

Hail, glorious light! the offspring of the skies!
Ungravitating power, no fall, no rise,
No weight, no sound, no touch hast thou at all;
But yet the shape and colour of each ball
Each moment thou dost paint, and well portray
The darkened shade, the opening of each day.
But for thy beams, what could we search or know
Of this bright scene, or of these worlds below?
God said, "Let there be Light," and forth it came,
Ere these its central orbs were filled with flame—
Each atom beam a centre of supply,
Whence smaller lustrous sparks still outwards fly.
Each orb opaque, however dark it seems,

Can still pour back a reflex flood of beams,
 Varied in shade distinctive, to supply
 A mark to show its own identity.

IX.

See yon small Worldlet circling round its Sun;
 See it revolve each day or smoothly run.
 Unvaried yet by isle, or cliff, or shore,
 See how its waters storm, and heave, and roar.
 All seems a wilderness of surging storms—
 A shapeless mass its liquid round deforms;
 Unhabitable yet, no life seems there—
 All is the image of but wild despair.
 The billows roll, the whirlwinds o'er them play,
 And all as yet devoid of cheerful day.
 'Tis but the embryo of a future World,
 Where wave on wave, and storm on storm are hurled.
 Storm wars with storm, and angry waters roll
 Round its equator, and from pole to pole;
 But yet our faith can grasp a future plan,
 And now imagine the abode of Man.

X.

The Spirit moves upon the watery wild, [mild,
 The storms are hushed, the sea is smoothed and

The warring winds are calm, and dumb and still,
Before the fiat of the Almighty's will.
But hark ! the Omnific hand is working now,
And from the waves the monarch mountain's brow
Out from the surge its rocky points arise,
And reach the regions of still cloudless skies.
New continents and isles unnumbered show
Their varied shapes arising from below.
The level sea is cleft, and barren land
Between its Oceans now begins to stand
In bold relief upon the glassy plain ;
It now divides and hems the watery main.

XI.

The waters rise above and sink below
The firmament, and cloudy curtains show ;
The dingy vapour from the earth upheaves,
And spreads its moisture on the painted leaves ;
For now the herbage bright is coloured there,
The new-raised mount is clad with verdant hair,
The flowery vales are spread with juicy stems,
And banks and slopes the winding river hems ;
The forest trunks, of varied size and hue,
Offsetts the sameness of the Ocean's blue ;

The fruitful boughs, with pink and white, display
 The promise blossoms of a future day ;
 The flowery meads in richest glory crowned,
 And robes of beauty clothe the naked ground ;
 The glassy lake reflects the azure blue,
 Bespotted o'er with moving clouds so true.

XII.

But mark the deep! Though still and smooth it
 seems,
 With finny tribes the fecund water teems ;
 Abundantly the liquid mass brings forth ;
 Its warmest zones,—its icy South and North
 Send out their swarms, some naked and some bound
 In shell of curious shape, both square and round ;
 But all so well adapted there to play
 Their merry gambols through the salted spray.
 Though winds should roar, and tempests ride the gale,
 The tiny herring, and the strong-built whale,
 The coral millions, and the creeping throng,
 Can live and move, and still their joys prolong.

XIII.

But mark ! what plumes are these of varied hue
 Rising by millions from the briny blue ?

And spreading o'er the isles, and vales, and meads,
 And skimming o'er the lakes 'mong swampy reeds ?
 What notes are these, so varied and so sweet,
 Rising all round, the sunny morn to greet ?
 Though far below the notes of Seraph tone,
 They still can please, united or alone ;
 They show the Almighty's skill combined with
 power,
 And sound His glory every lustrous hour
 By choirs of every tone and sound, to show
 That Love's extended to that world below.

XIV.

Some move in high gyrations, and outspring
 The highest mountains with unwearied wing ;
 Whilst some, contented with a humbler flight,
 Around the shrub-clad vales and trees delight
 To wave their plumes, and chant their twittering
 song,
 And morn and eve their jovial notes prolong
 To Earth and Heaven. Both high and low, the swell
 Of Nature's music suits both scenes so well ;
 With varied notes, with many coloured plumes,
 Each tribe melodious different dress assumes,—

Some light, some dark, some yellow and some blue,
And plumes bedipped with gold, bedazzling, too ;
But all enjoy their being as they rove
O'er hill and valley, and from grove to grove.

XV.

But mark the varied quadrupedal throng
That walk the Earth, and scour the plains along ;
With silent tread, or loud and piercing roar,
They rise from Earth, and dwell from shore to shore,
Some clothed with furs, to shield them in the clime
Where Arctic blasts shall blow through future time ;
And some are clothed in light fantastic hues,
Where tropic beams their genial warmth diffuse ;
Some striped, or spotted, and some sober grey,
Some walk at night, and some employ the day
To bask in brightness, or to graze the mead,
And on its herbal green to sport and feed.

XVI.

These are the lower creatures of his power ;
They all partake his bounty every hour,
They move, they sing, they fly, or dive or swim,
And build up levels to the ocean's brim.

All sublunary scenes are living now,
 The Ocean's caverns, and the Mountain's brow,
 Are filled with lives of every needful form,
 The massive elephant, and tiny worm,
 The whale which navigates from zone to zone,
 The polypi enchained to native stone;
 The serpent draws its length with many a wind,
 Leaving no foot-prints on its track behind;
 The steeds and zebras scour the grassy plains,
 The groves and thickets ring with warbled strains;
 Ten thousand sweet varieties of sound
 Burst from the isles and shores, and all around.

* * * * * *

Each harp was silent, for the Omnific tones
 Were heard, and rang along the arch sublime
 With solemn accents mild. The harps unstrung
 Were laid aside, each royal head discrowned,
 While from the Glory Excellent came forth
 Creative words, that told that Man was formed.
 Each rose and bowed, and raised his harp on high,
 And with a shout exultant rent the Heavens;
 They toned afresh the gold, melodious wires,
 To sing the welcome of completed worlds.

XVII.

Harps of Eternity, discourse new songs
To Him to whom Eternity belongs.
Shout ! shout, ye Sons of God, nor silent be
While scenes like these we're honoured here to see.
Glory to God through endless ages pour,
And let your tones exalt Him more and more.
The wide creation now completed stands,
The finished work of His unwearied hands ;
And Man, the prince of that prolific scene,
Stands now erect, the Heavens and Earth between,
Endowed with reason, with vice-regal power,
To wield the sceptre every lustrous hour.
He stands pre-eminent above the whole,
And names all creatures under his control.

XVIII.

How far above the rest he stands erect,
Views Heaven and Earth with countenance direct.
In innocence, and purity of mind,
Distinctive holiness from every kind
Of lower creatures he's at once removed ;—
By this his destiny's sublimely proved.
He stands the Sovereign of that lower sphere,

As we are Kings, yet serve with holy fear
The King of Kings; we serve, and yet enjoy;
The powers He gave us faithfully employ
In His blest service; cheerfully we give
The praise to Him by whom we reign and live,
To see His empire spreading o'er the Vast—
Man, of His workmanship the glorious last.

XIX.

No! not the last! for see from out his side
How beautiful his partner seemed to glide.
More graceful still, the gentler of the two
Stands there to his and our enraptured view;
Stands there the Queen of all these lower scenes,
And on her happy partner blushing leans.
See! how expressive is their smile of love!
Its power transmitted from our realms above.
How perfect is their symmetry designed!
The image fresh from the Eternal Mind;
With motions easy, and expressive mien;
Their kindly words we hear, though far between
Our blest abode and that far distant sphere;
Their new-taught eloquence we love to hear.

XX.

Oh ! from their young loves what delight we draw !
Such perfect beauty bending to Love's law ;
Whilst round the garden each bright floweret gay
Sends up its sweets, and blushing owns the day,
The nuptial day, when they twain are made one,
In flesh, in purpose, and forever drawn
By cords of love, so soft and yet so strong.
Each owns to each, " Henceforth I but belong
Exclusively to thee, sole partner of my joy ;
Henceforth no more my own, I will employ
My tenderest thoughts to gain and hold thy love,
And worthy of its strong emotions prove ;"
Whilst both conjoined shall rise in reverent awe,
And worship to the Author of love's law ;
And while each life, upheld by Sovereign power,
Enjoys the blessings of each rapturous hour,
Gives back the glory in a stream sublime,
That flows and gathers strength through future time.

XXI.

Down on the blissful scene the glory pours,
And sheds its splendour on the winding shores
Of the bright river, and its meandering rills,

And sun-lit beauty all the garden fills ;
The tempered breezes o'er the waters play,
And waves and ripples dance the live-long day ;
The flowerets bloom, the fragrance mixes there,
And healthful odours spread throughout the air ;
The fruitage falls, or tinted blossoms fade,
Their varied colours checked with verdant shade ;
The living forms move on from scene to scene,
And crop the blades of wholesome herbage green.

XXII.

But fairer far, the Human form Divine
In naked brightness doth in glory shine ;
Erect it stands, or bows in awe profound
Before Heaven's King, and consecrates the ground ;
A holy temple filled with worship pure,
In primal innocence they still endure
The slight forbiddance of the central tree
Sacred to abstinence. They still shall be
The favoured son and daughter of Heaven's King,
And morn and eve shall of His wonders sing ;
The groves shall listen, and the cliffs reply.
In echoing harmony shall mount on high
The praises poured from hearts to love so formed,

Each sacred duty cheerfully performed ;
Thus from the Earth their holy songs shall rise,
And anthems sweet shall emulate the skies.

XXIII.

Day unto day shall speak of wondrous power,
Night unto night teach knowledge every hour ;
The Heavens shall smile through all their glittering
 hosts,
And Ocean shall repeat through all her coasts,
The glory writ in golden letters bright,
The Sun by day, the Moon and Stars by night ;
The arch sublime of Heaven inverted lies,
And moving clouds traverse the painted skies ;
The Sun shall warm and fructify the plains,
Well watered by the timely dews and rains ;
Blessed by God, the seeds shall sprout and fill
The slanting valley and the towering hill ;
Till o'er the whole the flocks shall roam and play,
Repose by night, and pasture find by day.

XXIV.

But all the while, the wondrous wheels of Time,
The planetary orbs, shall march sublime

Through the wide Vast, and in elliptic flight
Their seasons mark alternate day and night ;
By each successive round's unerring way
Its needful changes on the Earth display,
The wisdom of His plan who marked the bounds,
And kept the planets in their various rounds,
That none can intercept its sister's train,
But walk in state along the ethereal plain ;
Each shall accomplish what His will designed,
And write the records of the Eternal Mind.

XXV.

Shout, all ye Sons of God ! The work is done !
Praise God the Father and adore the Son ;
Praise God the Spirit, moving o'er the deep,
When its wild waters rose from out the sleep
Of non-existence, heaved with startled roar,
Ere yet its waves were bounded by a shore,
Ere promontories pierced its yielding sides,
Or marked the margin of its Moon-made tides.
Admire His wisdom, and adore His might,
That orders all things and directs aright ;
Those mighty orbs, and their revolving spheres,
That measure out their days, and nights, and years.

Praise Him, thou Sun, as light and heat shall flow,
 Down from thy central fire on worlds below;
 Thou Moon and Stars, His glory still proclaim,
 And spread the knowledge of His wondrous name
 Till Time shall be no more, and Death shall die,
 And all things stamped with immortality.

CONCLUSION OF THE SHOUTS OF THE SONS OF GOD.

With wearied wing, the Muse descends again,
 And seeks repose, after a flight so far;
 So measureless the wilderness of thought,
 Untravelled yet by Angel or by Man.
 No further she essays to fly, but turns
 Back on the solid sublunary sphere
 From whence she took her flight. Enough is there
 To furnish feelings for Eternity,
 And fill the most capacious mind with praise.

Where is the spot, howe'er minute it seems,
 So fractional, divided and dissolved,
 Divided or dismembered, and unseen
 By eyes of insect or of animalculæ,
 In which the space is so confined or short
 That room and width to spare cannot be found
 For the wide workings of Omnipotence ?

Look on the air! The air is full of lives
Too small to send their shadows from the Sun.
Look on the Sea! Its waters are alive
With beings smaller far than sunbeams split,
Diverging and dividing evermore.

Look on each tiny blade! You there behold
A populated world of wonders full,
And teeming with the works of Him who raised
The towering arches of the Etherial Dome,
And numbers all the millieary throug
Of giant spheres that send their brightening beams
Through the transparent vast of vacant space.

All! all is full of God! His power unfolds
Each moment fresh varieties of life,
And recreates, and nourishes and fills
Each life with smaller lives; successive pours
Fresh beauty on enfoliated stems;
And though the surging storms and winter's frosts
Seem to entomb them, and enchain at once
The living streams, and all that they contain
Of life and beauty in ten thousand shapes,
Yet from a fire far distant sends a blaze
Of healthful warmth,—reanimates, renews
Its fine pulsations, its productive powers.

All here but live to die, and die to live,
Successive in posterities upraised
And quickened, reconstructed from the wreck
Of dead ancestral dust again embreathed,
With the same air that once sustained their sires
In all preceding ages of the past ;
Air ready to inflate the unformed cells
Of lungs as yet unfashioned from the clay.

The leaflet dies, and the fair flower of Morn
Lies withering on the sod ; its colours fade,
Its fragrance is dispersed, its substance changed,
But on its withered, wasting form a race
Of animated insect life upsprings,
And feeds upon its now dissected veins, [gorged.
And draws new life-blood from what Death dis-
Aye ! and the Spirit-world surrounds it all,
Invisible, intangible, unseen,
Unknown to us, but knowing us, perhaps,
Far better than we ever knew ourselves.
The guardian Angel's eye the steps secure
Of all the safe inheritors of Heaven,
Till o'er the billows and defeated storms
That gather round the portals of the grave,
They mount and leave this ever-shifting scene,
To meet the immortal millions round the Throne.

ANALYSIS OF THE ANTE-MUNDANE STATE.

The mind of God alone filled the Vast. Where could a blank stand? No measurement. Without an angle or base. Immense, yet nowhere. Shapeless and motionless, yet not dead, as life was yet ungranted.

No light. No darkness. The Orbs of Heaven unhung. Knowledge, and feeling, and sight, were absent. None eall to be created, or aspire to be born. The various negatives.

The curiosity of a verse that tries to express the "backward march of an Eternity."

The impossibility of trying to paint the Map of Nothing. The wonder of attempting it.

Though poetie numbers cannot express it, the fancy is cheered by them in looking back on the waste behind.

Non-existence lies motionless, waiting the Divine command, and pays dumb worship to His unexpressed will.

The daring and presumption of looking on the Past, or meditating on the eternal conceptions of the Divine Mind enthroned between two eternities. Knowing and unknown. The unencircled centre, from whence all being first moves.

God felt not alone, for all the future was as near Him as the present and the past. We cannot tell when He first began to create, or that no older creations existed before this.

The first Eternity known to God alone. What is annihilation? More cold and dismal than death, and destitute of the

consolations of Christianity. But the Muse must revert to the Past. The gloom that pervades the mind on exploring it. No constellations to guide in navigating it. The expansion of thought necessary to conceive of its vastness. The measures of Eternity fail. The negatives of past Eternity enumerated. Pride rebuked in view of the Past. How comparatively short the time of human greatness. How small the point it occupies. The proud exhorted to compare their dates with the Past, and to think of Him who raised them from the clod, and drew even that from Nothing. God needed but to hold back His arm, and nought had been.

THE ANTE-MUNDANE STATE.

Nought save the Mind Eternal filled the Vast
Expanse of emptiness,—the boundless blank
Of past Eternity. But where could stand
A blank, where all was blank, and nought was
limned?

No circumscribed admeasurements enclosed
The rounding of that hollowness uncurved ;
A sideless hollow and a squareless cube,
Without an angle, and unbased it rose,
Unpointed as unsolid and unsquared.
All was. And all was not. A thingless thought
Ingraspably immense, yet nowhere found ;
A shapeless, topless, bottomless concave,
All motionless and still ; though nought was dead,
For nought as yet had lived ; and Death's unknown,
For deaths are but the negatives of lives.
Life lay ungranted in the Will Supreme.

No light was there. No darkness threw its shade
Yon lustrous orbs were all as yet unhung
In the void concave of the unvaulted skies.

None knew, none saw, none felt the viewless Vast;
None mourned the want of being, and none called
To be created, for no wish had heaved
With craving wants ambitiously to soar
To the strange eminence of being born,
And bursting from the womb of emptiness
Into the sunshine of substantial life.

Untenanted Eternity lay stretched
In dreary waste and solitude sublime,
Under the single glance of God's own eye.
No song of praise as yet had rung the void,
Unechoing arches of Eternity.
Dumb Nothing's voiceless and unawakened sleep
Still held unrevolutionary reign.

Nature—that transcript of the Eternal Mind—
Anticipated not her wondrous launch
In the substantial being which she took,
When raptures from the morning stars arose,
And measured anthems from the infant choirs
Of God's own sons, in ecstasies of joy
Greeting in gladness as they met the embrace
Of fellow-travellers on the road of bliss.

Thus Nothing stood, if standing could be called
When motion was not, and when matter still

Was immatured and unsubstantiated ;
 A baseless, boundless, bottomless profound,
 An unideal void intangible,
 Unseen, unfelt, unknowing and unknown,
 Save by the Omniscience of the Mind Supreme.

Baseless abyss of being unbegun !
 O could I comprehend or near express
 The backward march of an Eternity,
 The unborn essence of the Evermore,
 Beginningless, foundationless expanse
 Of that which was ere anything could be,
 I'd call my verse a curiosity—
 The monster of poetic pictures rare.

Could numbers paint in lineless colours cold
 The Map of Nothing, or that shoreless sea
 From whence this continent of being rose
 Obedient to the voice Omnipotent,
 What miracle could emulate the Muse
 Which thus sings nothing on a stringless lyre ?

Though no harmonic numbers can express
 The negative of being, or give sound
 To the dumb echoes of the primal void
 Of Non-existence, yet the well-toned wires
 Of measured song may cheer the quivering wings

Of Fancy fluttering round the edge of Fate,
 And gazing on the woeful waste behind.
 Unbreathing Non-Existence lay unfledged,
 Unmotioned, waiting the command Supreme
 To start to life successive in the forms
 Of varied being, and with reverence,
 Dumb worship paid, His will still unexpressed.

And shall I dare, with Fancy's feeble ray,
 To gaze in ecstasy of stolen thought
 O'er the far regions of unworlded space,
 Or waken Nothing's yet unwaked repose?
 Or, more presumptuous, shall I dare to scan
 The eternal visions of the Mind enthroned
 For ever between two Eternities?
 Knowing eternally, and yet unknown;
 Seeing eternally, and yet unseen;
 Loving before His love could be returned;
 A radiant centre uncircumferenced,
 From whence all beings move in mystic lines,
 And whence immortals take their forward flight
 And thread the mazes of unending life.

The Three One God, throughout the unpeopled
 past
 Of non-existing being's backward tide,

Felt not alone, for all the future lay
As near him as the present and the past.
He felt the weight of all Futurity
With equal pressure on His balance true.
And can we tell how long since first He slung
A secondary being from the grasp
Of His creating energy immense?
Or say, at what a distance from this hour
Stood the far island on the sea of space?
Or, that no elder-born creation lay
In the wide bowels of Infinity
Ere yon bright arch was hung with globes of gold,
And gravitation linked its jewelled chains?

The first Eternity was known alone
By Him, whose double empire claims the two;
The second is revealed to countless throngs
Of beings knowing but of yesterday.
To them the Past is unexplorable;
The future, certain in unmeasured length,
Holds all immortals fast in being chained,
From which they never, never will unloose,
Or leap from Life back on nonentity,
And reach annihilation's gloomy shore.

Annihilation, what art thou? A grave—

The yawning sepulchre of sepulchres, [death.
 More cold, more drear, more dead than common
 Hope-killing creed, this monster thou hast dressed,
 To veil its retribution from the world,
 And make men hope that hopes shall all expire,
 And Non-Existence heave its iron jaws,
 To swallow at one gorge the race of Man.

Annihilation ! O thou miry tomb
 Of thought, and hope, and life, and love, and joy !
 Thou arch extinguisher of happiness !
 Thou worse than sting of death ! Thou sting of life !
 Forever stinging, but without the balm
 Of consolation, that blest anodyne
 Which springs from Heaven-born hope
 Of glorious immortality's bright scenes.

But as our Muse is destined on the Past
 To gaze, and sing the emptiness unseen
 By Angels, let us leave just now the field
 Of wide Futurity, and on the rear
 Of being throw the strains of backward song,
 And serenade the Night of Nothing's reign.

O what a gulf of gloom endrowns the mind
 That struggles to explore back turning tides,
 Where landmarks never meet the weary eye

Of mental vision, and where billows roll,
 Wrapt up in shades where shadows cannot fall;
 And where (unlike our Ocean's level blue)
 No constellations guide the Timoneer, [shore
 Whose venturous bark has borne him from the
 Of warm reality and living life. [room!

Stretch the thoughts out! Give contemplation
 Spread Fancy's fiery wings and soar on high!
 Send the conceptions back behind all dates
 Accountable in retrograde chronology!
 These millionaire cycles unbesunned,
 Square back and cube the millionth of their powers,
 And that again recube as many times
 As there are grains within ten thousand worlds,
 And multiply it still by sunbeams sent
 From all the suns that star the midnight heavens;
 And to the sum let cyphers stand in line,
 Far as the farthest bounds of all the thought
 That man or Angel ever did conceive,
 And still you barely touch the nearest edge
 Of either of these two Eternities,
 And stand as far as ever from extremes.

Unpopulous Eternity behind,
 Thou layedst in state, unlighted and unwaked!
 No sound, no touch, no taste, no smell hadst thou;

No feeling and no thought, no retrospect,
And no anticipance of coming storms,
No premonitions of adversity.
No fabled fancies of the Future fawned
To soothe thee in thy present woeful want ;
No truth, no lies, no witchery of sense.
Folly or wisdom thou hadst none at all ;
No war, no peace, no holy leagues allied
To chain the march of thought, or fix more firm
A race of tyrants on their tottering thrones.

Barren and bare thine uninvaded realms
Lay unluxuriantly waste, incultivate,
Unploughed, unfurrowed, and unirrigated,
Unsunned, unripened, and unharvested.
With nothing laid in store thou fearedst no want ;
And though improvident, thou neededst not ;
Thou feltst not famine, and thou fearedst no plagues.

No revolutions with volcanic power
Broke up thy silent reign, or threw the sparks
Upon the magazine of mischief stored
In dark recesses of the breast of Man.
All, all was tranquil as a grave
Where nought was buried, or a charnel house
With door unopened to receive the dead.

Ye proud possessors of this paltry world,

Who prance and plume yourselves upon the toys
Which Heaven's permission for a while bestows !
Who stalk along the road that leads to Death,
That great receiver-general of debts
Due by us mortals to Mortality,
Think, think how short the measure of your joy ;
And if you dare not look at scenes before,
Where long futurity shall hold you bound
Forever fast in retribution just,
Look back—perhaps your cowardice will bear
To view with less alarm the pristine Past,
The vast, vast void from whence your glory grew,
And whence your brittle empire was reclaimed.

Look back six thousand years, or more, perhaps,
For dates have ciphers in infinitude.

Look back behind creation ! View the vaults
Of mouldering emptiness, which, unexplored,
Held the great Nothing from which all things came.

Look back ! Compare your yesterdays of time
With the broad blank of Past Eternity,
And learn your littleness, unlearn your pride.
Let Nothing's nakedness your trappings shame,
And glean humility in emptiness.

You do not count your pedigrees enough ;
Just near enough to foster boastful thoughts.

You think of grandsires gathered to their tombs,
 And make their virtues jewels in your crowns,
 Or broad indulgence for your present sins.

But oh, look back behind their births, and see
 How narrow was the point both you and they
 Could occupy upon this infant orb.
 Compare your dates of temporary glare
 With the still cycles when your name was not ;
 Think of Infinitude, and learn to bow
 Before that Power which raised you from the clod,
 And wrenched that clod from Nothing's firm
 embrace.

And was it thus your pride ignobly slept,
 Long after worlds and systems had outsprung
 From the wide womb of the Eternal Vast?
 Unfathomable emptiness, where God alone
 Unworshipped reigned, and needed but hold back
 His arm creative, and nought else had been,
 And all the tinsel of your transient hour
 Had never mocked the golden beams of Day.

Your crests, your scutcheons, and your liveried
 train,
 And your proud selves had never waked or moved,
 But undistinguished and unenvied slept
 A dreamless dead—dead mass of Emptiness.

